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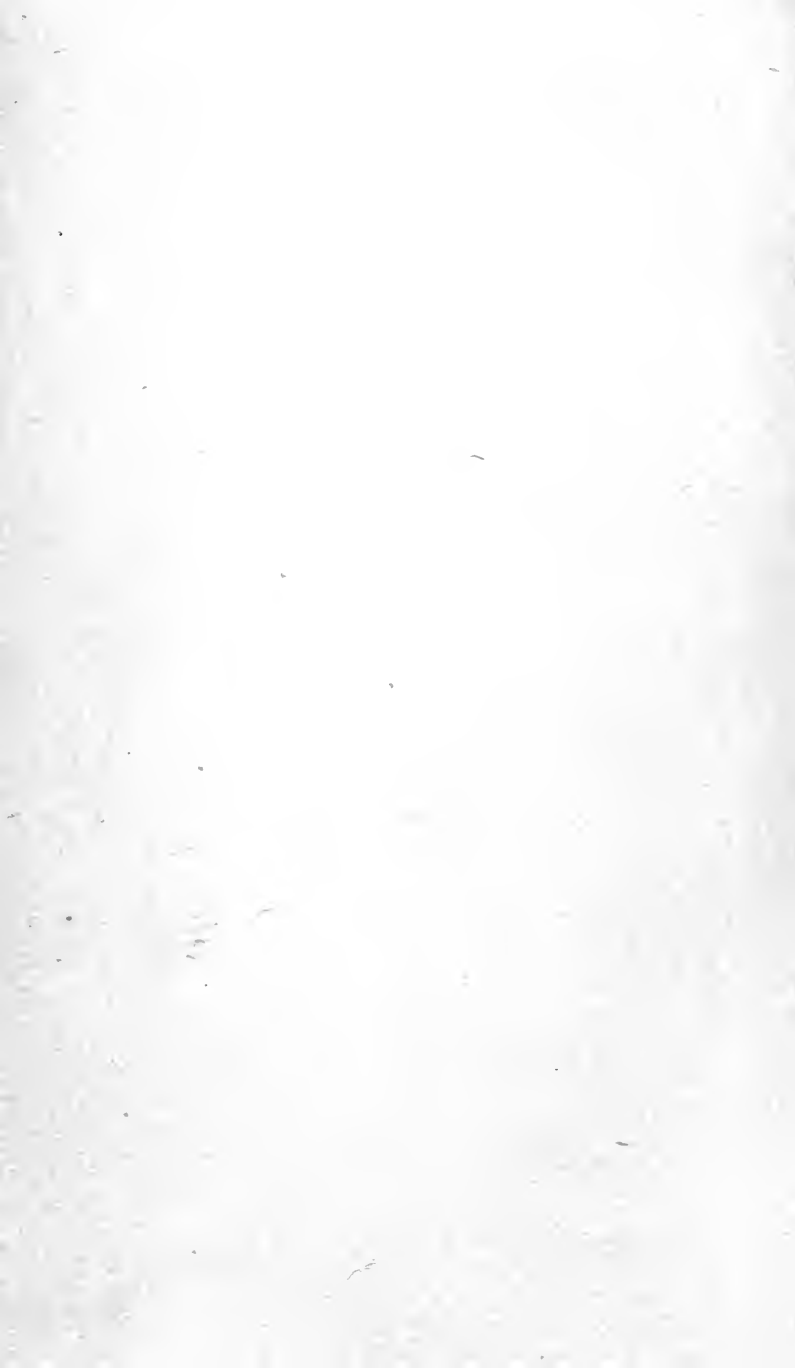
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TITANS AND GODS



TITANS AND GODS

*rederick
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BY

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LONDON

CHRISTOPHERS

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CONTENTS

TITANS:

Page

PRELUDE	9
AUGUST 1914	10
FLANDERS	11
ARDGAY	12
SONNET	13
THE AIR-WAY	14
THE BATTLEFIELD	15
THE MIDNIGHT PATROL	16
THE SCOUT-FIGHTER	17
SPRING	18
THE HAWK	19
NIGHT	20
GREY DAWN	21
SHAKESPEARE	22
SECRET TREATIES. I	23
SECRET TREATIES. II	24
NIGHT AT SCHEVENINGEN	25
THE RAINBOW	26
THE ROAD	27
ON HEARING THE FOG-HORNS OF A WARSHIP TO A 'GENTLEMAN' FARMER WHO HOLDS "POETRY FOOLISHNESS AND NO PRO- FESSION FOR A GENTLEMAN"	28
THE WALKER AMONG WINDS	29
PRAYER	30
PSYCHE	31
AFTER STORM	32
	33

	<i>Page</i>
OUT OF SPACE	34
THE QUEEN	35
EUROPE 1914-1918	37
THE METAPHYSICIAN	38

GODS :

THE DÆMON	41
AFTER READING THE GOSPEL OF SAINT JOHN	47
THE SIN	48
THE ROCK	49
FAREWELL TO MATHEMATICS	50
SCALES	52
MAN	53
MASTER CELLS	54
THE PILOT	55
A BLADE OF GRASS	57
ANY DAISY	58
NIGHT-FLYING	59
TO D. C. B.	60
THE COCKNEY'S DREAM	61
WITH NIGHT AMONG THE MOUNTAINS	62
OVER THE DEAD	63
ODE TO THE POETS	64
ROADS	67
LIFE AND DEATH	69
THE MOON	70
DECEMBER 1918	72
RETURN	73

TITANS

PRELUDE

EARTH, Air, Ocean, came in desolate grace
With natal gifts of elemental rune,
Those three stark souls of saga, to commune,
Each with his hollow breast and empty face,
Beside the ancient cradle of my race,
Each with a sorrow. In a broken tune
Bars of that long lost epic I have hewn
Out of a wandering heart on windy ways.

AUGUST 1914

(After reading Descartes)

WERE I but buried ; in the soundless deep
Of those eternal arches, that arraign
The brindled fury of a universe
Of thundered joy and surges of slow pain
Before the changeless soul. There is no sleep,
No waking, dream, nor any fitful curse
In these cold courts. Beyond the brazen doors
The tumult of ancestral chaos pours.

Standing amid his monuments aghast,
Diminished man his meagre arm upthrows,
Erect, and waiting on the crash of doom.

The air is black with banners. Round her tomb
Mouldering to ancient dust, a soaring blast,
England arisen, bared for the battle, blows.

FLANDERS

TWO broken trees possess the plain,
Two broken trees remain.
Miracles in steel and stone
That might astound the sun are gone.
Two broken trees remain.

ARDGAY

A HUNDRED pontiff hills entomb
Passionlessly, my purple home.
Buried in a haunted cup
Where the flashing snakes writhe up
In coils of crested foam.

SONNET

THERE is no atom of corporeal things
Transcends its show. Though barbèd beauty
sent

Through every porch beget a ravishment
As of some bright ætherial hand that flings
Eternal tunes across Time's trembling strings,
Forbear, with scalpel of vain wit, to tent
The world's dumb walls, wherein no song is pent,
Nor prise the throat about the voice that sings.

Not hills endure. All bases are sea-sport.
Scared to their height, the staggered Heavens
count

For each live lamp, that grimly burns to ice,
A million stanchèd. Death blows his shunless
mort

Across the mystic waters as they mount
To grip the narrow grave where Nature lies.

THE AIR-WAY

THE Road ! The Road lies deep and wide and
clear.

The Road whereon my spirit graven lies.
The Road is as my soul ; she is a fear,
A living splendour and a wanderer's prize.

The Road ! The Road runs on from anywhere,
And Nowhere is her passion, for her Rome
Is Everywhere. So need my spirit fare,
And in far faring find a hollow home.

O Road, were I indeed as great and free
As thou, in all thy vast unconsciousness,
Then were my soul indeed a road, and she,
Taking the Universe in cold caress,
For that she is no more herself than thee
Should by thy measure therefore greater be.

*This sonnet is a variation of a poem on the Sea
by the great Dutch poet William Kloos.*

THE BATTLEFIELD

WHEN, from a platform planted in the sky,
I have surveyed the fever and the toil
Whereby men strove to steal a little ruth
Out of the night, marked how the living soil
Lies ever by dead waters, like a foil
Forged by fools' fury, that the final truth
Of finite things on earth might fitly lie
Frailly in stone awhile, before men die ;

Then is my soul indeed a battlefield,
Whereon the unstarred East hold tournament.
Alas ! the West with all her wingèd lights
Retreats before this darkness triple-sealed,
Leaving a world of broken spears, and bent
Blades in the traces of the Christian knights.

THE MIDNIGHT PATROL

I STAND in the cathedral of God's brain,
And through the window of His aerial eye,
As a disdainful hermit from too high
Ramparts of virtue, mark the inconstant stain
Of delible ambition wax and wane
Over the soil where men and maggots pry ;
While wraiths of vanished æons surge, and sigh
Forgotten valour and sagas of dead pain.

Down like unanchored stars through precipice
Of stark night, plunge my sudden thoughts where
your
Dear raven head in our wild Eden is
Asleep in the arms of Lomond and Ben More.
Lo ! All the ages crown themselves in this ;
Each grain of sand the centre of a shore.

THE SCOUT-FIGHTER

HE, the perfect pilot, knows
The lift of every wind that blows
Along the aerial street.

He, high Heaven's arch-athlete,
Trembles on the perilous keys
Of Death's unmortal ecstacies,
Weaving out of rushing fears
The stable rhythm of the spheres.

SPRING

SPLENDOURS pale as sorrow sleep
In the silver eye of spring,
O I am slain with the sheer sweet pain
Of a beautiful broken wing
And a voice too pure to sing.

THE HAWK

HEAVY with the brackish wine at midnight I
Pledge thee in thy polar enterprise
Who art the keen edge of sobriety.
Colder than crime art thou and arrow-wise
And strong. Thou art the most perfidious beast
that flies.

I too have drunk delight in weakling's tears,
The rapture of quick cruelty, and the prize
Of sudden prey. I too have handled fears,
And filled the air with iron merchandize,
Like a pitiless falcon nailed upon the skies.

Thou art the grinding intellect that whets
The razor reason on the throat of love.
Thou art the satyr of the soil that sets
His image with the gods, and downward drove
His body like a bullet on the homing dove.

Thou art the image of the Earth, grey bird,
Thou desolate island moored in the unpoled
skies ;
The aerial absolute, the sullen surd
And tragedy of cosmic enterprise.
And lo ! A hundred hawks assail our broken eyes.

NIGHT

NOW the strong black hand of night
Crushes the mountains out of sight,
Out of sight and out of being,
There is Nothing for my seeing.

All the songs are sung away,
Not a whisper left of day.
Not a note of leaf or bird,
There is Nothing to be heard.

I am far from toe and heel,
Only I can grimly feel
Nothing like a flower growing ;
There is Nothing for my knowing.

I am far from hand and head,
Standing out of air and dead,
Dead, and standing out of air,
There is Nothing everywhere.

GREY DAWN

THERE is night
In the heart of the rose.
The lilies weep.
There are tears in the wind
As it blows
The stars to sleep.

The gods are fallen
To stone ;
Their songs to sighs
For the stars that were gold,
And are gone
Out of their skies.

SHAKESPEARE

WHEN to the market-place of dreams I went
To bid a penny for the firmament,
I sudden came upon a star-high man
Whose mighty composition hid the sun
With wings as wide as worlds ; and, when he ran
In space, I thought that wind and he were one.
Abrupt he checks those truceless feet and stands
Deliberate with lightnings in his hands,
Over the Sphinx. Created things attend,
The speculations of the gods descend
Upon Earth's human champion stood at bay.
A moment's pause—slow subtle smile—and he,
Murmuring “ Lord ! what fools these mortals
be ! ”
Heedless and headlong goes his boisterous way.

SECRET TREATIES. I

WE thought to find a cross like Calvary's,
And queen'd proud England with a diadem
Of thorns. Impetuous armies clamouring
For war, from the far utterance of the seas
We sprang, to win a new Jerusalem.
Now is our shame, for we have seen you fling
Full-sounding honour from your lips like phlegm
And bargain up our soul in felonies.

O England, it were better men should read,
In dusty chronicles, of how a death
Had found thee in the van of these crusades ;
To tell their eager sons with bated breath,
And burning eyes, about a golden deed,
A vanished race, and high unmortal Shades.

SECRET TREATIES. II

IS it a god that thunders like a sea
Upon the gates of Gaza ; should I play
Samson and bear the brazen strengths away,
Leaving this wooden citadel to be
The sport of every storm successively ?
Beleaguered by the embattled stars, the bay
Of marching winds, the desperate array
Of anarchs banded in the heart of me,
I cannot hear the sacred bugles blow
Nor see the white battalions of the Cross.
Each head is Janus. Every proud crusade
Boasts on its hell-wrought banner holy braid.
While o'er the dead, uncowering harpies crow
Patriot fervours and batten on our loss.

NIGHT AT SCHEVENINGEN

THE North Sea shakes

His ranks in
Thunder
Through

The moon,
Beats and breaks

His flanks in
Sunder

To
The dune.—

Cold
Song,
And pitiless
On rock and century.

Bold,
Strong
And cityless
My soul is as the sea.

THE RAINBOW

DOWN snowy crags when thunder rives
Embattled clouds, the rainbow drives
His brilliant foot, upsoaring thence,
Athwart the storm's magnificence,
While banded chiefs of tempest glare
Through dark streamers of wind-strown hair,
To bind a burning arras on
The base of Heaven's blue garrison.

THE ROAD

WHAT do you know of the Road,
Tramping the dry stone way,
Down in the bloodless broad
Plains, by day.

The Road, it is made out of hills
And the stuff of the night,
And the boom of waters that fills
Me with daft delight.

I was naked as wind. I know
The meaning of bread ;
A casual crust would go
Like wine to my head.

By God ! I would rather have died
In the splendour of my cave
In the hollow hill-side,
Then live in your grave.

ON HEARING THE FOG-HORNS OF A WARSHIP

THE horns of death ! They blow, they blow
From the bridge of the iron show
That stands upon the sea,

As a god in exile sings
The agony of wanderings.

We break no stone, nor rear the Earth
To sign the compass of our mirth.
Yonder our steel Temple lies ;—
In the dark, it cries.

TO A 'GENTLEMAN' FARMER
WHO HOLDS POETRY "FOOLISH-
NESS AND NO PROFESSION FOR
A GENTLEMAN"

GENTEEL serf, since you despise
Us for the foolish things we prize,
Honouring an idle song
Not less than your industrious prong ;
Pray, clench your gentlemanly hand
At God, because at His command
Such idiots exist as He—
That splendid fool on Calvary.

THE WALKER AMONG WINDS

TOWERS were my teachers, for I lodged my soul
In naked magnitudes. I set on sea,
On cataracts, on red activity
Discharged in thunder from the aerial coal
Of God, the sign of mortal mastery.

Man the untutored warrior ! He could bind
The wingèd waves like strangling ice. He tore
Obstreperous lightning out of air. He bore
His banner in the stars, and walked the wind.

But when I stand upon a cloud I know
A sorry circumstance. The shrivelled crust
Of mountains shattered down in level dust,
And man desolved like unremaining snow.

Then fare I far away to find a doom,
Forever seeking ; but I know not whom.

PRAYER

THOU, in the centre of indifferent dearth
Saidst suddenly "I AM," and straight wast God.
Into the night thou dravest thy word, a rod,
Cleaving the chaos, with the windy mirth
Of a delirious demon. And a sod
Stole from the sea, and where thy foot had trod,
Followed and fawned, and fell to woe and worth
And the tremendous circumstance of Earth.

The tortured fiction of thy fancy bleed
To westward, like a dead sun in a fen,
Through the wracked fibres of thine empery.

In this foul furnace which all women feed
With flesh plucked living from the bones of men,
Show me a star, or curse thyself, and die.

PSYCHE

WHAT demon hunter winds his wintry horn
Across the untented plains, beyond the bourne
Of being ; summons thee to make him mirth
Starwards and thinking in a clod of earth ;

To count a few poor battered coins and stir
The sands for bread, and with fond fingers play
With haunted clouds, and then to drift away
Forever, O thou liegeless wanderer ?

Surely thou art, O unremaining one,
As a persistent moth about a light,
Doomed for a while to range the treacherous zone
Of some great Truth, and with frail sensuous
 might
Assault the burning body of a god,
And then—farewell to soul in thinking clod.

AFTER STORM

WHAT iron hand is at thy throat, O Water,
That thou who wert a king of speech art stood
Like a lone wraith about a field of slaughter,
That weeps and prays and knows not what he
would ?

The clarion eloquence, that loosed in each
Gigantic gesture on the tremulous air
Rebellion and fierce vials of despair,
In timid quavers falters on the beach.

This Titan spirit clamped within his clod
Of separate Earth to-day rears like a storm
To toss the winding stars and tread the skies.
Till calm to-morrow bends his scorching eyes
For crusts upon the mire ; his resolute form
To crouch like whining curs at every rod.

OUT OF SPACE

OUT of space
And eternity,
God found this place,
And time for me.

One cup to drink,
To draw two breaths ;
To be one link
Between two deaths.

Two lightnings mark
One point—my scope,
From spark to spark,
My verge of hope.

One flash to bring me
Is employed,
And one to fling me
Down destroyed.

THE QUEEN

BE still brave Nature's eloquence,
Thy gallant chants are charmless now.
I have drawn experience
From the same well as thou.

Dear air-strown vaunts, the sea's kind words,
The deliberate gesture of grave trees
Cannot bemuse with golden chords
One wise as these.

Fain would my suffering mother fold
Translucent veils before her face,
That, elemental pains controlled,
She might win me a little grace.

O I have rent the show of green
Heroic fiction, found the rods
Of a nameless wraith. The Queen
Of all the gods.

All the gods of Heaven stand,
The kings of earth in ancient line,
On a sleeping infant's hand,
Even on mine.

Black, beyond the gods of Heaven,
Above the monarchs of the earth,
Broods the All-God, who has given
Empire to Dearth.

Now the wine is tinged with gall,
The shining fruits of Eden rot,
I rise to meet the great Queen's call
To be, and be forgot.

.
Come Thou, cradled in whorling water,
Ice-bound hair and mouth of stone,
Come Thou, and walk like a sea-king's daughter
The streets of inland Babylon.

Rived in the rush of her own fierce fountains
Died my heart to my heart's desire ;
Nailed to the shoulder of windless mountains,
Prey of eagle and sport of fire.

Queen of Silence, through starless spaces,
Where angels tremble, and tall gods kneel,
Come Thou dreadless, in wintry graces,
Brow of iron and breasts of steel.

EUROPE 1914-1918

"The events of recent years may induce certain of our thinkers to modify their enthusiasm for the importation of Occidental Culture."
—Indian Paper.

CHAOTIC crime, that on the red cloud crest
Of antique passion ramped like maniac sand,
Blindly tempested, purposeless, unplanned,
Ruffianed the cowering culture of the West ;
That Eastern wit can point its ghastly jest,
"Europe, who rose with reason in her hand
To bid the moveless march of darkness stand,
Is gone up in the smoke of her own zest."

An iron rhythm through vast seasons rolled
Before light dawned ; so day to dark came vowed
That fall should mate with rise for evermore.
Based on which timeless Golgotha, behold,
Cleaving the convex of tumultuous cloud,
The star-zoned spire of Man's steep spirit soar.

THE METAPHYSICIAN

FIRMER hands than these have caught
God, in the cages of a thought.
Chaster eyes than these have been
About the body of the Queen.
Though I be unworth the skies'
Favours, yet I may surprise
Subterranean towers and test
This dagger in a dragon's breast.

GODS



THE DÆMON

PIT-A-PAT, Pit-a-pat,
All the dark years I never heard that
Pit-a-pat, Pit-a-pat.

When I stood
In the black wood
 Apart,
Where the swarm
Of devils storm
With a worm
In my heart.
Pit-a-pat.
I never heard that.

Pit-a-pat, Pit-a-pat,
 Twenty-three winters,
 All icicle splinters.
 Twenty-three springs,
 All green ghaſt ſtings.
 Twenty-three autumns
 Twirled like teetotums,
 Twenty-three ſummers,
 Mouthing like mummers,

Hustled and hurled,
World within world.
Pit-a-pat, Pit-a-pat.
All the dark years I never heard that.

Pit-a-pat, Pit-a-pat.
At dead midnight,
Like the spirit of fright
When I stood on the brink
Of Hell—I think
I should have gone mad
If not for the glad,
Soft silence of that
Pit-a-pat, Pit-a-pat.

The protean churl,
Like a passionate girl,
Came to the tip
Of my heart with a lip
So slight, that it seemed
As though I had dreamed
Then away fled he
Into mystery.
Pit-a-pat.
Two dark years I never heard that.

Pit-a-pat, Pit-a-pat.

Yester year I again heard that,
Louder and longer,
Prouder and stronger
He came, with the beat
Of storms in his feet ;
Came with the flash
Of lightning, the crash
Of planets under
Shattering thunder.
I felt the dart
Of his tongue to my heart,
The flaming bands
Of his iron hands
Tearing the ghost
Of my will from his post.
He slaked me my drouth
In the wine of his mouth,
Flooding a red
Foam through my head,
So that I stood,
Like a man made of blood
In a drunken daze,
Singing his praise.

Pit-a-pat, Pit-a-pat.

Yester-night I again heard that.

Clear and sure.
I flung the door.
 In trod
 The god.

He held a glass
Where all time was.
He took the sands
In his hands,
And let them pour
Upon the floor.
He bid me tell
Them as they fell.

I counted once,
I counted twice ;
He said, " O dunce,
Count thou them thrice."

In a trice
I counted thrice
As the sand
Slipped through his hand ;

I counted seven separate times
The sands in seven separate rhymes.

But how often I might count
I always made a strange amount,
For the sands would always run
Out of numbers into None

Then he caught a million miles,
And set them on the floor in piles
And he caught a million others
And set them down beside their brothers
He took so many million more
That all space lay on the floor

He bid me tell the miles, but I,
Howsoever I might try,
Found, as I had found before,
Always Nothing on the floor.

Then he took a million men,
A million others, and again
Million upon million hurled,
Till all the nations of the world
Were in my little chamber, even
All the denizens of heaven

Thus he laboured to rehearse
The pageant of the Universe,

And ever at each total beauty
He bid me do my ghastly duty.
But howsoever I might count,
I always made that strange amount,
Till I heard the Dæmon cry,
“The whole is here, and it is I.”

Then I looked long, long at him,
Till I grew faint and very dim.
And I saw to my surprise
My spirit standing in his eyes.
And I saw a symbol sit,
Awful, on the head of it.
I saw a dread, unspoken truth
(Dare I say it, in my youth,
When I have yet some days perchance
To mingle with earth's circumstance ?).
I saw—I saw—O God !—I saw
(Speak it low with holy awe,
Speak it difficult and dark,
Lest the sons of Adam hark),
That I, two thousand years, had worn
On Calvary, the Crown of Thorn.

AFTER READING THE GOSPEL OF SAINT JOHN

IN the right hand
Of God I stand,
Though wind and the seas
Are my enemies.

Storm may cover
My soul, but the Lover
Of men shall set me free.

The surge has broken
My spirit and spoken
The word of sin through me ;

But shore shall lie
When the tide is high
In the centre of the sea ;

And I will make
To port, and take
Greatly, Town and Tomb.

Or trim my sail
To the driving gale,
And ride with God to deep sea-doom.

THE SIN

I SAID to modest Sin,
“ Why lurk shamed within
Thy secret cell,

“ Like a cloistered woman
Hallowèd of no man,
With book and bell ?

“ Throw thy god-grafted arm
Over me like a charm,
Stand forth, thou fighter.

“ Stand high and apart
On the tower of my heart,
With mace and mitre.”

THE ROCK

NAILED to the universe triumphantly,
A Rock. Not Wind with all his bludgeoning,
Nor Water stretched upon his iron wing,
Come scathless from that naked panoply.

He stands up in the stomach of the storm,
Tearing the wind ashriek in twisted lengths ;
In multitudinous chaos he is form,
He is a god and stronger than sea-strengths.

Art Thou indeed in Thy vast isolation
The Rock Supreme when monuments are sand,
Where, through the tumult of the trembling ages,
A hunted and forbidden soul may stand,
When on the driven wind the water rages,

Or art Thou but the crown of all frustration.?

FAREWELL TO MATHEMATICS

I LABOURED on the anvil of my brain,
And beat a metal out of pageantry.
Figure and form I carry in my train,
To load the scaffolds of Eternity.

Where the Masters are,
Building star on star,
Where in masonic ritual
The great Dead Mathematical
Wait and wait and wait for me,

To the deliberate presence of the Sun,
(Bright cynosure of every darkling sign
Wherein all numbers consummate in One),
Poised on the bolt of an un-finite line,
As one whose spirit's state
Is unafraid but desperate,
Though far unfathomed fears,
Through time to timeless years
I soar, through shade to shine.

They say that on a night there came to Euler,
As eagle-eyed he stared upon a star,
Thrall'd in the spell of mighty space, a toiler
Like to himself and me, for things that are

Buried from the sight alone
Of men whose eyes are made of stone,
And led him out in ecstasy
Over the dim boundary,
By the pale gleam of a scimitar.

Then, Euler, mindful of thy lesser need,
Be thou my pilot in this treacherous hour ;
That I be less unworth thy greater meed,
O my strong brother, in the halls of power.
For here and hence I sail
Alone, beyond the veil ;
Where square and circle coincide
And the parallels collide,
And perfect pyramids flower.

SCALES

COPERNICUS.

“ HAVE lavish æons prodigal of toil
Waged then for *thee* their million generous laws,
Thou faint cognition, bolted up in soil
Like whine in sea-shell or a tenuous gauze
That half is not ? for *thee* rose red Turmoil
Raving along the Silence, to embroil
The libidinous Beast of Chaos, till his jaws
Wrenched by tempestuous Form, reveal the
Cause ? ”

PTOLEMY.

“ There is no standard in the strongest star,
Nor meritorious land, nor constant sea,
To mark a mile or demonstrate a worth.
Only in this high human spirit are,
(The clean articulation of the earth)
Scales, and a semblance of stability.”

MAN

HE walks the world with mountains in his breast,
And holds the hiltless wind in vassalage.
Transtellar spaces are his fields of quest,
Eternity his spirit's embassy.
The unearned acre of the firmaments
Under his hungry harrow, yields increase.
While, from the threshold of dim continents
They beckon him, who bear the stars in lease.

And yet is he a thane of foreigners,
On sapphire throned, but in an unkinged house,
Arrased with honours, brodered in gold sheen—
A palace in a town of sepulchres.
Voices he hears, but knows not what they mean,
His own to him the most mysterious.

MASTER CELLS

MAN is not stone, nor is Man's monument
Built in the hungry stomach of the sea.
Though Time have a tomb, and Space a destiny,
Though rock with wind be burst and burnt and
 blent,
Bright rolling organs of the firmament
Hang dulled and speechless in black Heaven's cone
When down the night the dark dead sun is thrown ;

Yet, in the virtue of a magnitude
Or of a cask of steel, in fire secure,
Or of a microbe, scathless in a storm,
Minute and massive, garmented and nude,
From Time concealed, insensible to form,
Ageless and spaceless the Master Cells endure.

THE PILOT

HE is liege of wind and the thunder,
And desperate resolute things.

On the market-skies

His spirit buys

A drink of death on desolate wings.

His hands

Hold Fate.

He stands

Like Hate

Between the winds and under

The flashing brim

Of the waters, slim

U boats wilt at the sign of him.

He rides the wild cloud-horses

On tracks of polar gold.

His heart is hound

Of the hunting-ground

Where the ghostly stags are foaled.

Through hives

Of stars,

He drives

His cars

Along moon-metalled courses.
His feet are shod
With lightning-rod,
To walk the living hand of God.

A BLADE OF GRASS

HORSES I saw, and on the horses gods,
Cumbering desolation as they massed
In battle on the plains around this vast
Toil of the Titan Masons, in whose hods
Swirled the red energy of lightning-rods
As they this cloud-compelling trophy cast ;
Till conquered chaos withered in the blast
Of Heaven's loud bugles blown at diremost odds.

Here is the heart of hazard where the fate
Of cosmic things hangs dubious to Time's end.
Nor shall the traces of the sword endure,
Nor all man's wit the matter arbitrate.
The awful powers are armed and naught's secure !
Within this blade the hostile stars contend.

ANY DAISY

I ADDRESS

Her Mightiness
In fear.

Nor have forgot
That she is not
More near,

Nor more far
Than any star
To me ;

Then am I
Afraid, and cry
For Thee.

Lord ! “ Be kind,
For I am blind
With shame.

“ Lord, is this
A flower or is
She flame ? ”

NIGHT-FLYING

ALOFT on footless levels of the night
A pilot thunders through the desolate stars,
Sees in the misty deep a fainting light
Of far-off cities cast in coal-dark bars
Of shore and soundless sea ; and he is lone,
Snatched from the universe like one forbid,
Or like a ghost caught from the clay and thrown
Out on the void, nor God cared what he did.

Till from these unlinked whisperers that pain
The buried earth he swings his boat away,
Even as a lonely thinker who hath run
The gamut of great lore, and found the Inane,
Then stumbles at midnight upon a sun
And all the honour of a mighty day.

TO D. C. B.

“OTHERS had parents, you had only me
An ugly, cross, auld buddie,” so you sighed
When many years ago my mother died
In far-off foreign London. And then we
Fled to the hills like deer in jeopardy.
Mine infant hands you laid on power, and plied
My heart with flame, and bade me fearless ride
Away from you to meet the advancing sea.

Robed in red dreams with Ninus have I gone
To win Semiramis at Babylon,
Travelled in Faerie, bright with elfin dames
Who had instructed Phidias in despair.
Evil and good with all they hold most rare
Are to your central splendour but dim frames.

THE COCKNEY'S DREAM

HE heard a voice storm up the falls of song.
A vision flamed across his soul's dark blind.

He saw huge serpents hurrying along,
And a great lion raving in the wind.

On shattered, red, tremendous feet the grim
Ghast ghost of London gaped—and gripped at
him.

WITH NIGHT AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

TIME, in the van of fallen centuries,
In fallow spaces swings his unfleshed scythe.
Lo ! Deathliest night burns through eternities,
Where ragged waters rave and shrewd winds
 writhe
Over the blunted hungry edge ; but those
Unmortal trophies where strong dreamers trod—
Vast shadows loitering on moon-taken snows—
Out-tower tall Time and scale abreast of God.

OVER THE DEAD

WHO in the splendour of a simple thought,
Whether for England or her enemies,
Went in the night, and in the morning died ;
Each bleeding piece of human earth that lies
Stark to the carrion wind, and groaning cries
For burial—each Jesu crucified—
Hath surely won the thing He dearly bought ;
For wrong is right when wrong is greatly wrought.

Yet is the Nazarene no thane of Thor,
To play on partial fields the puppet king,
Bearing the battle down with bloody hand.
Serene he stands, above the gods of war,
A naked man where shells go thundering—
The great unchallenged Lord of No-Man's Land.

ODE TO THE POETS

THIS is the world you made
Out of the songs you sang ;
And the songs unsung,
Like swords, are flung
Down, where dead men hang.

Be gluttons of this ripe red star,
Of her rich mouth be your mouths amorous.
Her breath be on your blood
As sunrise on a bud.

Be pirates, and make war
On boats that bear the golden bar ;
Be misers, mild and mean,
In the reaper's prints, to glean
Glittering straw, servile and sedulous ;

But be kinglike—cold and taut
Beneath a facile skin ;
Be as Gods in your deep thought,
A bended bow within.

Let pagans plant their spirit in the forms
And figure of the earth ;—poor temporal faith
That dares not look into the eye of death,
Because its God is vulnerable to worms
And ill in face of cannon-shot.

They may not sing upon the battlefield
Whose All is sensitive to rust and rot ;
 Their rosy strings of eld,
 Forgetful of the songs they held,
But horrid lies and tuneless discords yield.

Who hath had commerce in grave peaceful hours,
With sacred, awful, elemental powers ;
Who, undismayed, while yet the kind dawn shone,
Looked to the scroll of flesh and read thereon
How in each man there walks his skeleton ;

He, in the crashing circumstance of doom,
 Under the splitten skies,
 When the iron devil flies
Through white vestures flaming from the loom
Of Nature weaving, even in the tomb,
 Beauty for the hour she dies.

He, in his steadfast thought shall rise
Above the treason of his eyes,

To follow sight beyond his seeing,
To borrow breath above his being ;
Till shattered flesh and twisted bone
Are mingled into air and gone ;
Till he stand up in the starkness
Of his spirit, and the darkness
Of Death and Light are one.

ROADS

THOUGH to Master Priests be given,
By grace, in single holy levin,
Carnal privilege of Heaven ;

Yet all Earth is flood with foam
Of loveliness, to lead us home.
There are many roads, but Rome

Is everywhere. Old Skullcap, who
Half-crazed his wits a-nosing through
Philosophies, at eighty-two

Stumbled in, with stool and staff,
Plotting Thy Eternal Graph
On his poor brittle cenotaph.

Young Science, linked with worship, came,
Gowned at last in comely shame,
To find in every flower a flame.

Who a painted cheek had kissed,
Were he rake or atheist,
Had kissed Thee, though he never wist.

But, to be a poet's prize,
Thou hast thrown through tiers of skies
From Earth, Thy topless masonries,

That we might step from stair to stair,
Of beauty piled on beauty, where
The spirals end in Thy sheet lair.

LIFE AND DEATH

LO ! Life and Death, the Lover and the Maid,
Of birth is She
Most rare, and He
Wistfully afraid.

I and Thou—the Science and the Truth,
As Life meets Death
Breath on Breath,
Age into ageless youth.

THE MOON

GHAST mass of ice, thou tomb
Once a live womb
Teeming to birth ;
Even as Earth.

Thou, even as
Earth, from the primal mass
Swirled into space,
Folded thy shrunken face,
Buckled thy molten base,
Till seas boil and roar
Where crags smoke and soar
Out of thy blazing core.

Thence to thy Cambrian night,
Silurian trilobite,
Darting belemnite,
Gigantic dinosaur,
Swooping thy desolate shore
Where the sheer course is
Of the tapir-toed horses,
Upward to shape
Man out of ape,
Out of a beast
Poet and priest.

Now thou art led
On a viewless thread
Round Earth new-born, with thy cargo of dead,
That a bird should sing
In the heart of spring,
Of winter waiting to shatter her wing.
Thou floating tomb,
Thou withered womb,
Thou pale Cassandra of Troyland doom,
I who rest
At the burning breast
Of beauty fling thee a golden jest.
Go slay with slight,
Stolen might,
Lark and linnet, but spare the kite
Or ever he harry thee out of night.

DECEMBER 1918

THROUGH this pontiff hill I hear
Christ comforting, with ghostly cheer
The last hour of the dying year.

Poor-broken-hearted year ! who fain
From her tomb would turn again
For pardon, that she brought us pain.

.

Night has strown my heart until
I see the silence of this hill
Is God's sad spirit standing still.

Standing still, because He fain
Would let the poor year turn again
For pardon, that she brought us pain.

RETURN

THE hearts of the mountains were void,
The sea spake foreign tongues,
From the speed of the wind I gat me no breath,
And the temples of Time were as sepulchres.
I walked about the world in the midnight,
I stood under water and over stars,
I cast Life from me,
I handled Death,
I strode naked into lightning,
I had so great a thirst for God.

.

The heart of the mountain overfloweth,
The sea speaketh clear words,
The Ark is brought to the Tabernacle.
Lightnings that withered in the sky
Are become great beacons roaring in a wind.
I see Death, lying in the arms of Life,
And, in the womb of Death, I see Joy.
I had said "The Spirit of Earth is white,"
But lo! He is red with joy,
He devoureth the meat of many nations,
He absorbeth a vintage of scarlet.

Though my head be with the stars
All the flowers of Earth are singing in mine ears.

Though my foot be planted on the sea-bed
Yet is it shod with the thunder.

Sorrow for Earth Transient is passed away,
Pain of martyr'd splendour is no more.
They have left a fair child in my lap,
A lusty infant shouting to the dawn.

The Ogre of midnight hath perished,
He shivered in the glare of the mountain,
He screamed upon the swords of the sea,
His bowels rushed out upon the lances of the wind.

I shall not descend from the hill,
Never go down to the valley.
For I see on a snow-crowned peak
The Glory of the Lord,
Erect as Orion
Belted to his blade.
But the roots of the mountains mingle with mist
And raving skeletons run thereon.

I shall not go hence.
For here is my Priest,
Who hath broken me in the waters of Disdain.
Here is my Jester,

Who hath mended me on the wheels of Mirth.
Here is my champion,
Who hath confounded mine ancient Enemy.
Ardgay—the slayer of giants.

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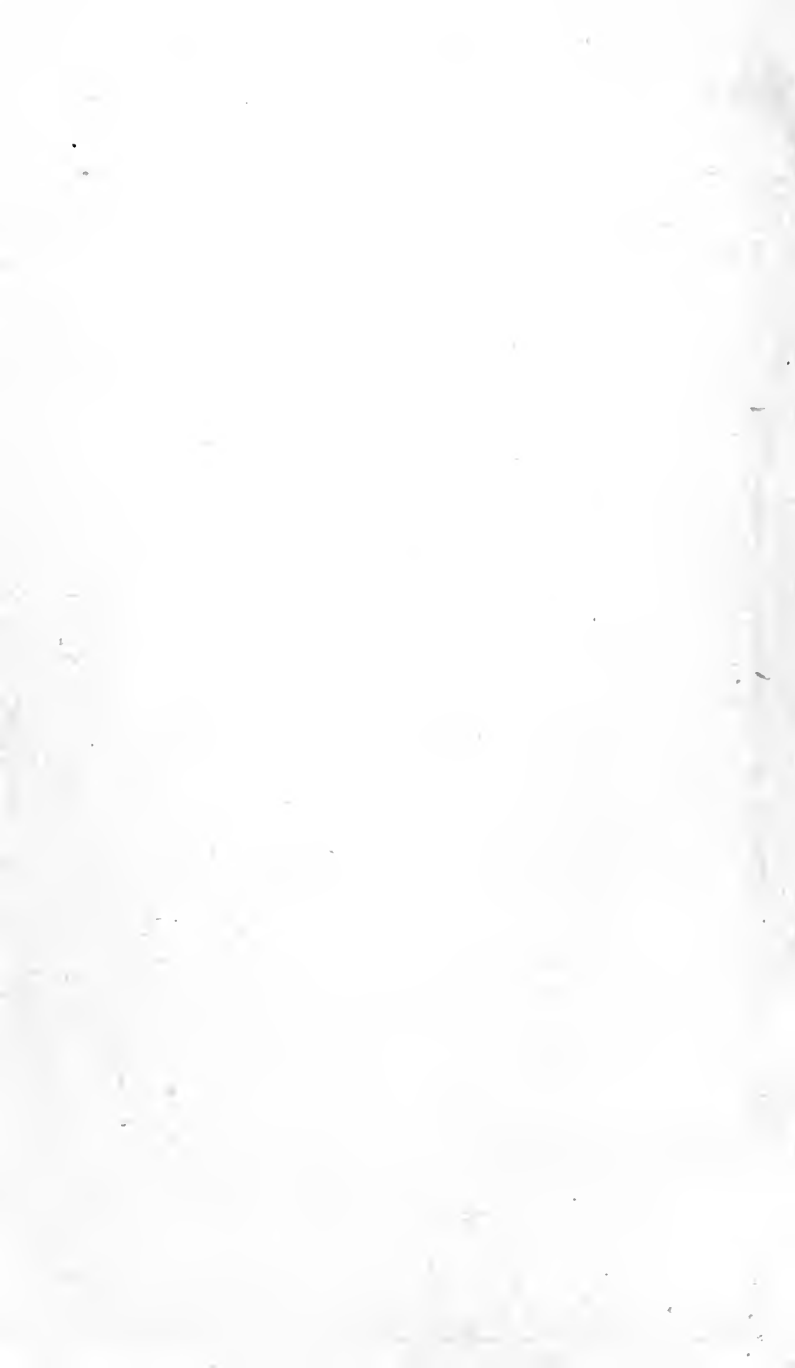
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